Interior Columbia Technical Recovery Team meeting #12, December 11th, 2002 (including subgroup meetings on December 10th) Portland, OR

Members present: McClure, Schaller, Petrosky, Carmichael, Howell, McCullough, Cooney, Hassemer
Non-members present: Carson, Holzer

I. Review of Subgroup Results and Draft Outline – Snake River Steelhead Pop. ID decisions (see previous meeting minutes) based on a second review of all available information

1) Upper Salmon: The East Fork and upstream will be lumped into one population because of similarity in habitat, connectivity in known spawning and rearing areas, and lack of evidence to the contrary.

2) Middle Fork: Loon Creek will be in the Lower Middle Fork population, joining Camas and Big Creeks. Although it lies south of an ecoregion break, the system's characteristics are more similar to that of Camas Creek.

3) South Fork: Confirmation of previous decision to separate out the Secesh river from the rest of the South Fork population on the weight of genetic evidence.

4) Grande Ronde: Rich located evidence from the 1960's delineating spawning aggregations in the mainstem from Elgin to Willow Cr, and from Island City upstream.

a) Catherine and Lookingglass Creeks will remain part of the Upper Grande Ronde population, due to this connectivity, genetic evidence, and juvenile outmigration timing.

b) The Wenaha population will include all tribs outside of the Wallowa and Joseph basins until more information can be found about the Mud Creek genetic sample.

c) Joseph and Wallowa populations remain unchanged.

5) Imnaha: After re-examining the great distances between spawning areas, an option has been created to divide the Imnaha into a Lower tribs, Big Sheep Complex, and Upper tribs (Gumboot Cr upstream). This is opposed to including the whole basin in one population.

6) Lower Snake tribs: Mainstem tribs below Hell's Canyon (Granite, Wolf, etc.) will be grouped with the Tucannon and Asotin basins in the absence of information about them.

II. Review of subgroup results and draft outline- Mid-Columbia Steelhead population delineation based on available information

1) Klickitat: More information needed

2) Deschutes: Howard and Rich have been summarizing life history data. Current Questions: Does the life history information support an east/west split of the tributaries?
What is the spawning distribution in the Warm Springs river?
Does the life history information support lumping the mainstem spawners with the eastside tribs?
What is the effect of Round Butte or other Hatchery spawners?

Draft populations: 1) West side: Cascade tribs Warm Springs and Shitike Creeks
2) East side: Plateau tribs Trout, Bakeoven, Buck Hollow Creeks plus mainstem spawners.

3) John Day: Rich will contact district reps to ask about the basis for traditional divisions in the basin. Lower limits of mainstem and fork spawning (about 1000m elevation and 35-55 streamnet channel width) identified by regional bios and streamnet suggest four major spawning aggregations:

1) Upper mainstem: Mainstem spawning occurs above the town of John Day, population would include the scattered spawners in tribs downstream to the confluence with the North Fork.
2) South Fork: separated by genetic information. Includes tribs to confluence with mainstem.
3) Middle Fork: Mainstem spawning above Beaver Creek area, includes scattered spawning in tribs to confluence with North Fork.
4) North Fork: Includes tribs to confluence with mainstem John Day.

5) Lower mainstem: Scattered spawning in tribs from confluence with North Fork to mouth

The middle fork and north forks could be lumped under a second option, due to possible connectivity in spawning areas (High density of tribs near confluence and extending to core areas)

4) Umatilla: Little information available on abundance or genetics, no major breaks in habitat characteristics. Basin is of sufficient size to host independent population. There is a break in spawning between the Birch Creek complex and upper mainstem.

5) Walla Walla: Possible separation into Upper Walla Walla and Touchet River complex because of their sufficient size and geographic separation. Review of genetic information needed.

6) Yakima: Review of info from previous studies (Hockersmith et al. 1995 radiotracking study, Phelps et al 1996(?) genetics analyses) suggest four independent populations in this basin:

1) Satus Creek
2) Toppenish Creek
2) Naches River
3) Upper Yakima

Review with D. Johnson, WDFW/Yakima biologists before next meeting.

III. Steelhead CWT tag straying analysis – criteria for CWT data:

1) Good recapture rate at release site
2) Rearing site should be known (hopefully acclimated)
3) There should be other opportunities for recapture en route to release site (ideally less than 50 miles from the site)

Possibilities: Pahsimeroi, Little Sheep, Wallowa, Big Canyon, Lower Imnaha Nez Perce data, possibly Round Butte
Create a special category for strays into the Deschutes river. Use any coded recapture sites along migration route as a zero data point if no recaptures occur there?

Cory will call Rich to schedule meeting in La Grande to complete analyses.

IV. Subbasin planning- Presentation by Elizabeth Gaar (NMFS) on the status and structure of subbassin planning committees currently forming around the basin. Discussion of TRT role in subbasin planning.

V. Population Viability – Members should prepare for a discussion of juvenile production and capacity in the basin. A substantial amount of time will be spent on this topic at the next meeting.

VI. Tasks

A. Genetic subgroup tasks (steelhead):

1) Run PCA analysis for local areas separately (Middle Fork Salmon, etc.)
2) Run PCA analysis for all Mid Columbia Steelhead
3) Genetic evidence for A run – B run split?
4) Review Currens report
5) Investigate genetic distance between the South Fork John Day and the rest of the basin.
6) Examine new genetic data for the Walla Walla basin
7) Determine level of hatchery influence in the Walla Walla basin
8) Review Currens Umatilla report
9) Writeups of 'big group' findings, within group infererences, analytical methods section for appendix ???

B. Other tasks for Steelhead Pop ID:

1) Damon will create a table including basin size and linear miles of spawning area by width, and a distance matrix for the draft population basins.
2) Rich will start writing about the Umatilla, Walla Walla, Grande Ronde, and Imanha basins
3) Pete and Charlie will start writing the Salmon and Clearwater basin sections (Pete will also start on Sockeye)
4) Tom will review info with D. Johnson, WDFW/Yakima staff and start writing the Yakima basin section (and also start on Fall Chinook)
5) Phil will start on the John Day basin section
6) Howard will start on the Deschutes basin section

VII. Future meetings- The next meeting will be in Portland, OR on February 5th and 6th, 2003